

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

PH0677680
FOR NPS USE ONLYRECEIVED MAR 20 1979
APR 30 1979
DATE ENTEREDSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Parsons Memorial Lodge

AND/OR COMMON

Parsons Memorial Lodge**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Tuolumne Meadows

CITY, TOWN

Yosemite National Park

STATE

California

VICINITY OF

CODE

06

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourteenth

COUNTY

Tuolumne

CODE

109**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service, Western Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

VICINITY OF

STATE

California 94102**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.Administration Building

STREET & NUMBER

Box 577

CITY, TOWN

Yosemite National Park

STATE

California**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**TITLE 1. List of Classified Structures
2. Historic Building InventoryDATE 1. 1975
2. 1961☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Western Regional Office, National Park Service (1975)
Yosemite National Park (1961)

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

STATE

California

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR
☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Parsons Memorial Lodge was built in 1915 by the Sierra Club and designed by Mark White, architect, and Walter Huber, structural engineer.

It is a one story, one room stone masonry building measuring about 28' x 50'. The walls consist of rough fieldstone-sized stones of pink feldspar and grey granite laid in an uncoursed rubble bond. The walls are 2' thick at the top and slope to 3' at the base, and have a concrete core which gives the appearance of dry walls, laid without mortar. The round arched door opening is located on the S. wall and is flanked by 2 rectangular 3½' x 5' windows. There are two 4' x 7' windows on the E. and W. walls. The door is round arched with heavy planks bound with hand wrought iron strap hinges. Each window consists of a pair of 8 light casements. The lodge has a low-pitched, overhanging gable roof supported by five 1'-1½' diameter peeled log rafters strapped together at the ridge. The rafters are supported by diagonal braces, both exterior and interior. The interior braces are bolted to the rafters and rest on low stone piers. The shorter exterior braces support the end of the rafters and rest on 5 large sloping buttresses on the E. and W. walls. Smaller logs, similar in function to "latias" in Southwestern Architecture, 6"-9" in diameter, were laid perpendicular on the rafters or "vigas", and corrugated iron roofing was placed on top.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1915

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Mark White, Architect
Walter Huber, Structural Engineer

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The design of Parsons Memorial Lodge gives the building regional significance in the category of architecture, and its 57-year history as Sierra Club headquarters in the Tuolumne Meadows region gives it local historical significance in conservation.

The building was erected in 1915 to serve as a meeting place for Sierra Club members in the Tuolumne Meadows region. It was designed by Mark White, brother-in-law of Bernard Maybeck of the Berkeley School, and for many years his partner in architecture. The lodge bears a resemblance to a group of structures at Lake Tahoe designed by Maybeck because of the use of stone, the battering of the walls, and the use of corrugated metal for roofing.

Parsons Memorial Lodge is an exceptional example of "rustic" style architecture, and perhaps one of the earliest in this region designed by a recognized architect. The building was designed to complement and blend with the surrounding natural environment, an area of glacially carved rock at the edge of a conifer forest. The roughly coursed granite boulders used in construction of the building, as well as the logs used in the roof construction, came from the immediate vicinity. The building possesses a rough, hand-crafted quality, recalling a more primitive, vernacular, pioneer mode of construction. Some of the stones used in the arched entrance are roughly squared; the use of an arch is a highly appropriate architectural choice for the materials used, being stronger than the lintel construction used in the shorter spans over the windows. The roof structure of log rafters and purlins reflects a pioneer style of building which could withstand extreme weather conditions; it is a basic response to the extreme climate and the raw materials available. The architect's response to materials and environment is typical of Maybeck's Berkeley School.

The building's success as an excellent example of environmentally harmonious rustic design was reflected in the statement of a contemporary architect that it "seems to grow out of the ground naturally and to belong there just as much as the neighboring trees and rocks." The building is handsomely scaled in relation to its environment, because of the size of the stones and logs and their parity with the raw materials in the vicinity. The battered walls and their emphasis on horizontality give the building the appearance of rising out of the landscape.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sierra Club Bulletin v. 9:4 (1915)

Jones, Holway John Muir and the Sierra Club: The Battle for Yosemite
San Francisco, Sierra Club, 1964.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .0803489

UTM REFERENCES

A 11 29 18 5 5 4 1 9 4 7 6 5
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary is a rectangle, 50 by 70 feet, comprising 3500 square feet, centered on the building.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Leslie Starr Hart, Cultural Resources Specialist

ORGANIZATION

DATE

National Park Service, Denver Service Center

10/75

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

655 Parfet, Box 25287

(303) 234-4509

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Denver

Colorado

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

OCT 17 1978

YES X

NO

NONE

Ann M. Ellison
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE J. B. McCloud

TITLE

DATE

Asst. Dir., Cultural Resources

3-11-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles B. Stevens
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

4-30-79

ATTEST:

DATE

4-26-79

J. B. McCloud
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

J. B. McCloud
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 20 1979
DATE ENTERED	APR 30 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Upon completion, the lodge was named for Edward Taylor Parsons, a director of the Sierra Club from 1905 until his death in 1914; Parsons was primarily involved in Club publications and worked closely with John Muir and others on the publicity surrounding the Hetch Hetchy reservoir controversy. Aside from a large meeting room, the building housed a mountaineering library for the use of the members and of the general public, and the building furthered the sierra club's work in spreading the conservationist ethic.

In subsequent years, the National Park Service adopted the "rustic" style as most appropriate in the national parks, and Parsons Lodge was one of a number of forerunners of many later NPS buildings in style and materials.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED AUG 9 1979

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

Significance

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE 3

This continuation sheet corrects an error in the National Register nomination form for Parsons Memorial Lodge, Yosemite National Park, California, based on newly-developed data. The existing form attributes design of the Lodge to Mark H. White, whereas the new data indicates that Bernard Maybeck was the designer and Mark White played a subsidiary role. Maybeck's role enhances the significance of the Lodge.

- - - - -

Parsons Memorial Lodge was designed by Bernard Maybeck and his assistant, Mark H. White, of the firm of Maybeck and White, San Francisco, California. The plans were first drawn up in 1913 and the building was erected during the summer of 1915.

Bernard Maybeck (1862-1957) was an American architect of world-wide renown. He is best known for designing the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco and the First Church of Christ, Scientists, in Berkeley. He also designed a number of buildings on the campus of the University of California in Berkeley, including Hearst Memorial Gymnasium, as well as dozens of residences in the town. He was largely responsible for popularizing the "Berkeley look" of rustic, shingle-finished houses. He was awarded the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Architects in 1951.

Maybeck taught in the Department of Instrumental Drawing at the University of California from 1894 until 1903. He also conducted informal classes in architectural design in his home as the university did not have a department of architecture until 1904, and thus influenced generations of architects. Julia Morgan was one of his students and a protegee. She assisted Maybeck in the design of Hearst Memorial Gymnasium and was the architect of the Hearsts' San Simeon.

Maybeck had first attempted to set up practice in Kansas City, Missouri, but because of the depression during the mid-1880s, was not able to find sufficient work. While there, he became a good friend of an experienced architectural draftsman, John White and the latter's sister, Annie. Their father, a college professor, recommended to Maybeck that he go to the San Francisco Bay area, where there might be more opportunity for a young architect. He followed this advice, but returned to marry Annie White on October 29, 1890. When her father retired in 1895, the Maybecks invited the Whites to come and live with them in Berkeley. Annie's younger brother, Mark, studied engineering at the University of California.

In 1902, Maybeck took Mark White into his practice as an assistant and partner, and the firm of Maybeck and White existed until 1938. In 1907, John White and George Howard were also in the firm. Maybeck did the initial design work and had trained Mark and John White to develop his sketches into strong, integrated designs. But while John White and George Howard assisted Maybeck, they also worked on their own commissions, and after fifteen months of experience in the Maybeck office, set up their own firm of White and Howard. John White was the designer of LeConte Memorial Lodge, constructed in Yosemite Valley by the Sierra Club in 1904.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED AUG 9 1979

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

Mark White worked as Maybeck's Assistant for thirty-six years. The two worked closely together, Maybeck doing all the original designs and sketches, Mark White developing them in detail. The latter never did original designs of his own during their association and had no independent commissions, but after Maybeck's retirement, White did design one house in Berkeley which had the appearance of being a Maybeck design.

Since Mark White was a member of the Sierra Club, he undoubtedly worked closely with Walter L. Huber, the construction engineer, on the building of Parson's Memorial Lodge, especially as Maybeck had become very involved that year in the Palace of Fine Arts project for the Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

Design of Parson's Memorial Lodge by Bernard Maybeck adds additional associative significance to the structure as deriving from the work of a significant American architect. As the Sierra Club's Marilyn Fry commented in a two-page manuscript on Parson's Memorial Lodge, "What is already a beautiful historical building takes on added significance for those who know of the work of Bernard Maybeck."

Continuation sheets 8(4) and 8(5) prepared
and submitted by Regional Historian Gordon
Chappell, National Park Service, Western
Regional Office, San Francisco, California
(415) 556-4165

Continuation Sheet Bibliography Item Number 9 Page 2

- Cardwell, Kenneth H., Bernard Maybeck: Artisan, Architect, Artist (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977), 257 pp. See especially pp. 172, 243.
- Fry, Marilyn M., Letter, July 17, 1979, to Park Curator Jack Gyer, Yosemite National Park, 5 pp., copy in Regional Cultural resources File on Parson's Memorial Lodge.
- Fry, Marilyn M., "Parson's Memorial Lodge, Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite National Park," ms., 2 pp., copy in Regional Cultural Resources File on Parson's Memorial Lodge.